What is claimed is:

1. A wireless data exchange system comprising:

an electronically operated appliance including a transmitter, a receiver, and a control module configured to communicate with the transmitter and the receiver, the control module being configured to provide a primary mode of operation and a secondary mode of operation and including control logic configured to selectively change the mode of operation of the electronically operated appliance; and

a communication device adapted to be held in the hand of a user and configured to cooperate with the transmitter and the receiver to impart instructions wirelessly to the control logic to change the mode of operation of the electronically operated appliance upon receipt of a command from a user.

2. The system of claim 1, wherein the receiver comprises a first receiver and a second receiver, and wherein said primary mode of operation comprises a sensing mode and said secondary mode of operation comprises a communication mode, the first receiver being configured to operate in the sensing mode and the second receiver being configured to operate in the communication mode.

3. The system of claim 1, wherein the transmitter comprises an active infrared emitter configured to selectively emit sensing signals capable of being received by the receiver and communication signals capable of being received by said communication device.

4. The system of claim 3, wherein the receiver comprises an infrared detector capable of detecting a communication signal and a sensing signal.

5. The system of claim 4, wherein said electronically operated appliance comprises an electronically operated fluid dispensing device.

6. The system of claim 1, wherein said communication device includes a communication receiver and a microprocessor, and wherein the communication receiver and the microprocessor cooperate to receive signals from said electronically operated appliance, identify the electronically operated appliance and determine the operating status of the electronically operated appliance.

7. The system of claim 6, wherein said communication device further includes an emitter that communicates with the microprocessor to transmit signals to the electronically operated appliance in response to signals received from said electronically operated appliance, the transmitted signals including instructions that change the operating parameters of said electronically operated appliance.

8. A method of exchanging data wirelessly between an apparatus and a communication device, said method comprising the steps of:

sending a wireless signal from a handheld communication device to an electronically operated appliance operating in a primary mode of operation;

changing the mode of operation of the electronically operated appliance from a primary mode of operation to a secondary mode of operation in response to said sending step; and

establishing a two-way wireless communication link for the exchange of data between the handheld device and the electronically operated appliance while the electronically operated appliance is in the secondary mode of operation.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein said handheld communication device includes a display screen, said method further comprising the step of displaying the operating status of the electronically operated appliance on the display screen.

10. The method of claim 9 further comprising the step of transmitting an infrared signal from the handheld communication device to the electronically operated appliance in response to the displaying step in order to change the operating parameters of the electronically operated appliance.